

# Teaching And Learning Practices Initiated In Department Of Management Studies, Christ University, Bangalore To Meet Global Standards

Balu.L,

Department of Management Studies Christ University, Bangalore-560029, India

E-mail: [balu.l@christuniversity.in](mailto:balu.l@christuniversity.in)

## Abstract

This research paper summarises the educational research underpinning Department of Management Studies (DMS), Christ University (CU) framework for supporting academics to learn about teaching. It is for those who want to know more about teaching and learning practices in higher education in knowledge based economy. Becoming better teachers not only helps student learning but can enhance careers, develop a sense of community and provide personal satisfaction for academics.

Learning to teach well at university is complex. Academics differ in the skills and experience they bring to teaching, as they differ in the students and courses they teach. Despite these differences, there are commonalities to learning and improving teaching across disciplines. In this presentation an attempt has been made to familiarize the teaching and learning practices initiated by the department to compete at global level especially in offering undergraduate programme Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA).

**Keywords** Learning Organisation, Knowledge Based Economy, Joint Teaching, International course, Mentoring.

## Introduction

Bachelor of Business Administration being rated number one course offered by Department of Management Studies (DMS), Christ University, Bangalore by India Today for the year 2012-13 it compels other universities offering similar courses to understand the qualities of Learning Organizations. Improving the learning experience will affect how students, employers and society view the experience, product and ultimately, the effectiveness of universities and higher education. According to Kim and Zhu (2010), "The need for higher education has become crucial in the age of globalization, as knowledge-based workforces have become an essential ingredient to acquire and maintain a competitive edge in the marketplace." Kim and Zhu (2010, p. 165) Today's technologies, serving as a conduit for higher education, can provide networks for the international integration of education and research and be facilitated to a very broad spectrum of learners world-wide with a reduced carbon footprint, at minimal cost and in direct response to the needs of higher education. Today's technologies that are vastly more reliable, versatile and cost effective have made a tremendous impact on our lives, both personally and professionally. Demands of higher education to broaden our existing classrooms into new world-wide opportunities have been equally extended. Study abroad, foreign exchange programs, and a diverse faculty base can broaden awareness, but to effectively serve all students we must adapt the subject content and our methods of teaching to gather and exchange information across the international community. This study from Department of Management Studies, Christ University offers a multiple view for academics that facilitates both institutional and technological synergies for interaction across the clusters for challenging tomorrow.

## Teaching and Learning practices initiated in Department of Management Studies

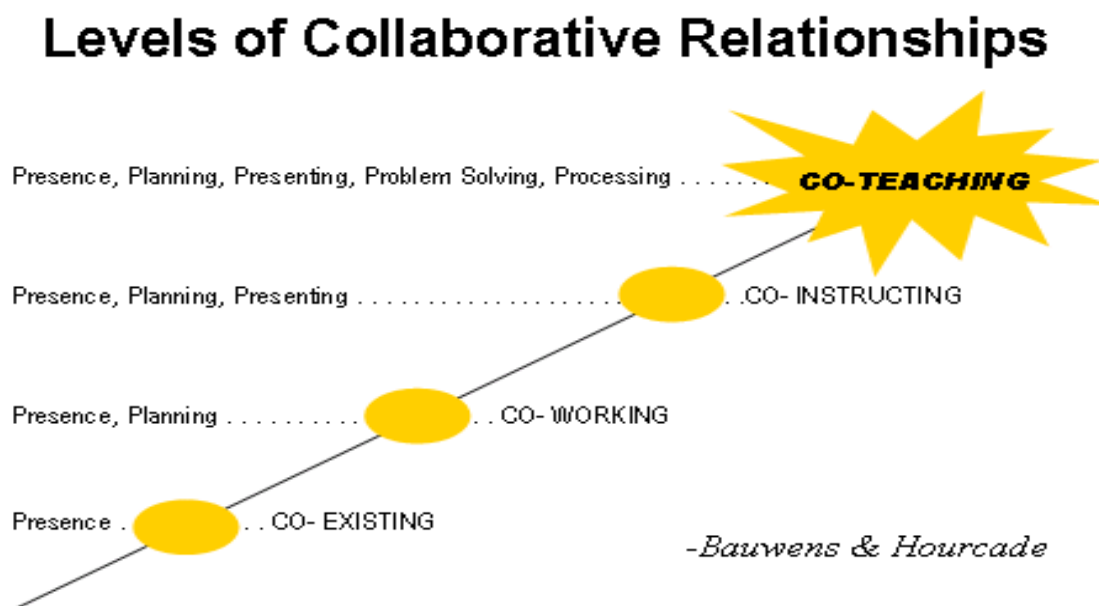
### 1. Team teaching and Co Teaching:

In team teaching a group of teachers, working together, plan, conduct, and evaluate the learning activities for the same group of students. In practice, team teaching has many different formats but in general it is a means of organizing staff into groups to enhance teaching. Teams generally comprise staff members who may represent different areas of subject expertise but who share the same group of students and a common planning period to prepare for the teaching. To facilitate this process a common teaching space is desirable. However, to be effective team teaching requires much more than just a common meeting time and space. Effective team teaching takes time to develop to its fullest potential. Staff who are unfamiliar with it need time to work through the basic issues and routine matters before they can turn their attention fully to issues which affect students and to the impact which their teaching has on the department as a whole. This is time well spent because team teaching can be a valuable source of personal and professional development for those who engage in it.

All subjects in Department of Management Studies are shared by two or more faculty members in the department. Be it is Financial Management, Strategic management or languages offered in our department which we outsource from language departments. Faculties have been thought of joint teaching and practices extensively. Even the Current Affairs (CA) and Co-curricular (CC) activities follow the same mode of imparting knowledge.

The general definition of co-teaching involves two equally-qualified individuals who may or may not have the same area of expertise jointly delivering instruction to a group of students. Co teaching if strategically designed it encourages teacher assistance, observational learning, and team teaching. Four faculties share responsibility for teaching all of the students assigned to a classroom for each subject, which is challenging for students as well as for a faculty. This insists for multi disciplinary approach. The following Fig.1 represents the process of co-teaching.

**Figure 1. Process of co-teaching.**



Team teaching and co teaching is always challenging in higher education because of changing technology and impact of technology on student community, competition from best global Universities, changing pedagogic teaching methodologies, and quality of students in a given University. Form the faculty members perspective challenges would be Co-teachers must not conflict, Requires supporting and carrying 100 percent of the load by both teachers and both teachers may have to be equally involved in the planning, grading, correcting, and supporting in the classroom.

## 2. Industry oriented curriculum:

The following quotations come from [Up to the Challenge](#), a report by the Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE), Career Technical Education (CTE), and the Partnership for 21st Century Skills (P21):

- The employment titan Manpower reports that despite the recession, 31 percent of employers throughout the world struggle to find qualified workers because of “a talent mismatch between workers’ qualifications and the specific skill sets and combinations of skills employers want.”
- The American Management Corporation reports that employers want workers, who can think critically, solve problems creatively, innovate, collaborate, and communicate.
- The National Association of Manufacturers reports, “Today’s skill shortages are extremely broad and deep, cutting across industry sectors and impacting more than 80 percent of companies surveyed. This human capital performance gap threatens our nation’s ability to compete . . . [and] is emerging as our nation’s most critical business issue.”
- The National Academies indicate that “The danger exists that Americans may not know enough about science, technology, or mathematics to contribute significantly to, or fully benefit from, the knowledge-based economy that is already taking shape around us.”
- The New York Times reports that low-skilled workers are being laid off and “turned away at the factory door and increasingly becoming the long-term unemployed . . .” This issue results from a disparity between the skills that worker have and those that employers need.

Articulating precisely what knowledge, skills, and abilities are to be mastered and to what degree they will be mastered are the hallmarks of credible competency-based programs offered by Universities today. This transparency is very attractive to employers for several reasons.

Employers need capable and creative people who know how to solve problems and communicate effectively. Best Universities globally inherently foster the development of higher order critical thinking, problem solving, organization, innovation, and communication skills of their students especially management education. The nature of competency-based education requires that students demonstrate the ability to apply what they know and have learned. Skills demonstrated through these types of learning artifacts provide significant evidence that an employee or potential employee has the ability to contribute to corporate efforts to be successful through innovation and competitive advantage.

Well-aligned curriculum saves time, effort, and money for all involved. Money, effort, and time saving models are extremely attractive to employers who are allowing employees release time from their job responsibilities and are footing the bill for employee education.

Industry oriented curricula in higher education involves project-based learning. It is also shown that the effectiveness of the course can be improved by designing the curriculum using modified Bloom's taxonomy and using various online tools and technologies.

Every semester subjects will get a new shape by considering the changing requirements of corporate/industry. Board of Studies (BOS) consists of experts from corporate and academia for final approval which will turn out to be a brainstorming session. Specializations offered from the 5<sup>th</sup> semester in the areas of Finance, Human Resources Management and Marketing attracts the corporate for placements from the beginning of 3rd semester itself. Credit goes to curriculum design which is both industry oriented and demanded by some of the best International Universities. This is facilitated through Curriculum Development Cell (CDC) in the department. The role of CDC is to interact continuously with industry experts while designing the curriculum. It is mandatory in the department that every subject should be updated through industry interaction headed by CDC chairperson. The feedback from the industry experts are articulated in Board of Studies Meeting and finalised for updating curriculum for the coming academic year.

### **3. Building core competency:**

Most competency-based programs require students to demonstrate sufficient mastery of every competency in their educational programs. Students cannot pass a course unless they have met the established standards required for all components of that course. All courses must be passed in order to receive a degree. Having employees with substantially developed skills sets is a valuable commodity to an employer. The less time employers have to spend training and re-training employees the more time their business can reap the benefits from an employee's expertise. This is very important to employers who want to avoid the costly consequences of hiring under-qualified individuals and other associated reckless hiring practices.

When hiring people who have been educated in competency-based programs such through industry oriented curriculum, employers can be more confident that the employees can actually do what they claim they can do. Another advantage of Industry oriented curriculum is that by the very nature of the competency curriculum development process, educational clutter is reduced or eliminated. Educational clutter includes information, activities, busy-work, and other extraneous elements that are not aligned to the objectives of a lesson, unit, or program.

"We now accept the fact that learning is a lifelong process of keeping abreast of change. And the most pressing task is to teach people how to learn." Peter Drucker. Starting from the course plan preparation to class room delivery faculty will add value by imbibing the culture of continuous learning. Challenging student community and academic community becomes the core competence of department in general and in CU as whole. Continuous research and publication at global front by the department faculties and students of the department makes the teaching focused and vibrant in class room execution.

Live projects are introduced in the curriculum every semester to bridge the skill gap that exists in the industry. Projects are addressed in all the areas starting from societal skills to modern entrepreneurial skills. These skills are critically evaluated by internal experts and students are prepared not only join the best corporate but to facilitate their family business or to have their own start up companies. Interestingly less than 30 per cent of final year BBA students take up placements, rest focus more on entrepreneurship as their destiny.

### **4. Continuous Learning through Continuous Internal Assessment (CIA):**

Henry Ford once said "Anyone who stops learning is old, whether at twenty or eighty. Anyone who keeps learning stays young. The greatest thing in life is to keep your mind young."

Continuous learning means we're keeping the "raw material pile" of our brain freshly stocked, which enables us to come up with more and better ideas and innovations — which every business needs today. New ideas and solutions are a primary way one can add value to a given job, and therefore increase success.

Noted self-help expert W. Clement Stone, in his many writings on this topic, recommended that you spend anywhere from a half-hour to two hours a day in study and thinking time. It's this tireless dedication, in combination with an insatiable curiosity that will propel you steadily forward in good times and bad. What's more, learning new skills and knowledge can be fun!

Continuous Learning in DMS students means continuous internal assessments. Continuous Internal Assessment (CIA) of students is one more adding feather for our sustainable growth. Creativity and Innovation in conducting and evaluating the student community makes stakeholders to look Christ University as temple of Attitude, Skill and Knowledge. The components of CIA take the form of review of articles, simulation exercises, case analysis, role play, internship to cite a few. It helps students mind sharp and skill fresh. It facilitates competency level of students. It gives variety of options for students to explore their career opportunities. Advantage of this type of learning is in the process of evaluating CIAs even the faculty member learns. It becomes a win-win strategy for student individual growth and faculty development. Strengthening courses through innovative CIAs calls for further research globally.

### **5. Mentoring and Peer Mentoring:**

A mentor is a wise and trusted counselor, a guide and teacher (Homer)

A mentor coaches, teaches, advises, supports, guides and helps the mentees achieve their goals...further his or her charges' personal and professional identities...teaches both how to get things done, and what not to do. (Bernice Sandler)

There are a number of practices that aid in helping a student to develop but having a mentor is certainly not a new idea, it has resurged in recent years in a variety of ways with a variety of results. Mentoring can happen in a number of ways, yet it almost always has a positive effect on the mentee, in both psychosocial and academic ways (Terrion & Leonard, 2007).

In Department of Management Studies, Academic Coordinators facilitate students as mentors and support faculty members through peer mentoring. Every Academic coordinator will have on an average 70 mentees every academic year spread across all three years of BBA and minimum 3 faculty member to mentor every semester, which is very challenging role for academic coordinators. In reality to become an academic coordinator is a privilege and honor which calls for balancing interpersonal, personal and societal skills in the department. Because such benefits can arise from mentoring programs, it is important that such programs are done well. While mentoring can have a significant impact on the student/mentee, when the student serves as mentor, there are also a number of positive outcomes on the student mentors' development. Peer mentoring is a mutual way of learning and allowing both participants to develop transferable skills that will help them during their time at university and beyond.

Mentoring must be seen as both a formal and an informal activity within the department, and one which encompasses guidance on teaching, research and service in the academy in addition to external measures of success such as in which journals one publishes.

### **6. International approach:**

Internationalizing course would require students to develop new global competencies. These include mastering the ability to navigate and adapt intercultural attitudes and sensitivities, manage conflict, and relate current affairs and evolving international trends and strategies. Intercultural competency has become an extremely important skill as a result of the cultural diversity manifested in the marketplace. (Spitzberg & Changnon, 2009, p. 337) Developing intercultural competence is also stressed by Paige and Goode (2009) who explain that those who receive such training have more expertise and confidence dealing with cultural issues than those who do not (pp. 333-349). Internationally collaborative learning has been in practice at many universities for decades. According to Faculties the interaction provided great benefits to their students. Teachers unanimously agreed that interaction enabled everyone to discover something significant through the process; it motivated students, re-energized class discussions and opened new dimensions of awareness and knowledge, and ultimately improved the student learning experience. Department of Management Studies offers an opportunity for their students through international internship, twinning programmes with Griffith University, Western Michigan University, Liverpool, Sheffield and so makes students globally competitive.

### **7. Technological approach:**

Today's technologies that are vastly more reliable, versatile and cost effective have made a tremendous impact on our lives, both personally and professionally. Demands of higher education to broaden our existing classrooms into new world-wide opportunities have been equally extended. Study abroad, foreign exchange programs, and a diverse faculty base can broaden awareness, but to effectively serve all students we must adapt the subject content and our methods of teaching to gather and exchange information across the international community.

According to Kim and Zhu (2010), "The need for higher education has become crucial in the age of globalization, as knowledge-based workforces have become an essential ingredient to acquire and maintain a competitive edge in the marketplace." Kim and Zhu (2010, p. 165) Today's technologies, serving as a conduit for higher education, can provide networks for the international integration of education and research and be facilitated to a very broad spectrum of learners world-wide with a reduced carbon footprint, at minimal cost and in direct response to the needs of higher education.

Department provide course outlines and course schedules prior to the commencement of the academic session through online. Department formally encourages blended learning by using e-learning resources. Virtual laboratories, e-learning, open educational resources and mobile education are some of the methods used by faculty members for effective teaching. Group of experts among the faculty will monitor the trends and issues regarding developments in Open Source Community and integrate its benefits in the university's educational processes. All these steps are initiated by the department to orient traditional classrooms into 24x7 learning places.

### Conclusion

Universities must forge a variety of ways to gather and exchange global information. Ultimately, changing the learning experience will change the effectiveness of higher education. It will evolve as ongoing creative exploration that integrates resources and adaptive methodologies through cutting-edge technologies, and it will require judicious input and evaluation, as well as critical support from the governing bodies that ultimately control the building blocks. Technology is providing the tools, but they must be implemented to yield the greatest benefits. Higher education must effectively gather exchange and cultivate information and the methods of education and research to maximize the synergies among programs around the world. This will empower students to work and function in our ever-expanding world of knowledge, which is higher education's new world frontier.

Developing key principles that underpin a variety of learning opportunities within the Department of Management Studies, Christ University professional learning framework allows for institutional coherence in supporting the learning of academics while encouraging flexibility and adaptation. This in turn builds global competency for any University.

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